

THE THIRTY-EIGHTH  
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Sanitary Condition of Bridgwater

FOR THE YEAR 1910.

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PREPARED BY

H. SHARLAND POPE, M.A.; M.B.; B.C., Medical Officer.  
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# THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE **Sanitary Condition of the Borough of Bridgwater** For the Year 1910.

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Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the usual Annual Report of the Sanitary Condition and Health of the Borough of Bridgwater for the Year ending December 31st, 1910.

I begin by quoting the general description of the town as stated in my last report, so as to give an idea of its topography and the chief occupations of its inhabitants.

"The Town is situated on the banks of the River Parrett, about eight miles in a direct line from the Bristol Channel. Owing to its antiquity in the centre of the town there exist many old properties, but these are gradually being replaced by more modern structures which are thoroughly up to date in order to meet the requirements of a progressive industrial and commercial population. Of recent years the town has rapidly extended in all directions by the erection of numerous houses to accommodate the gradually increasing number of residents. The River Parrett divides the town into two parts, almost equal as regards area and disposition of the inhabitants.

"The Eastern side is perfectly flat and the soil alluvial clay of considerable depth; on the Western side near the river the soil is of same character, but the ground gradually rises till in the higher parts we find a rather heavy gravel.

"The population is largely composed of artisans and people engaged in the staple industries, which are those of brick and tile making; this includes the manufacture of Bath bricks, which are used for scouring purposes and are made from the slime deposited on the river banks in and near the town.

"Several factories find employment for many hands, both male and female, in making linen collars and blouses. For this work during the past year two factories have made considerable additions and alterations, while an entirely new firm have commenced operations and have already taken on a large number of hands. There is also increasing trade being done at cabinet works and in basket and chair making of wicker work.

"Within the last few years many private residences have been built at the Western end of the town, which is fast becoming a popular residential quarter."

Population of the Borough, census 1901		15,209
	1910.	1909.
Estimated population	... 15,900	15,900
Area in Acres	... 923	923
Inhabited Houses	... 3,899a	3,612b
Birth rate per 1000 of population	24	26·4
Death rate	10·6	15·8
Zymotic Death rate	.05	.8
Infantile Mortality per 1000 births	99·2	125

a. Total number of dwelling-houses.

b. Dwelling-houses occupied.

Although the weather appears to have been unfavourable as regards diminished sunshine and increased rainfall the year has been a remarkably healthy one.

During the past year there were 200 Deaths registered in the Borough, as against 279 in the previous year, and after deducting 31 as the number of Non-residents who died in Public Institutions there are left 169, representing an annual death rate of 10·6 per 1000 of the estimated population.

This is by far the lowest death rate ever recorded for the Borough, the average for the last ten years having been 16·6.

The 200 deaths occurred as follows:—

	Residents.	Non-residents.
In the Borough	151	...
Bridgwater Hospital	7	17
Union Workhouse	11	14

It is very satisfactory to find that the number of deaths of Infants under one year of age is much smaller than ever before, being only 38, while for the preceding ten years the average was 56·7.

### Births during the Year.

Total number 383, being 24 per 1000 of inhabitants.

### Infant Mortality

For some years I have pointed out that our infant mortality was high, and I have expressed an opinion that much could be done to bring this down if only the mothers would take more care to suckle their infants at the breast. Whether my advice has been acted upon to any considerable extent it is impossible to say, but our rate of infant mortality is this year lower than ever before, and it is to be hoped that this improvement will continue.

Something might be done to assist this by the adoption of the Notification of Births Act, as has been done in many places. If this Act were adopted each birth would have to be notified to me within a short period of its occurrence, when it would be possible to watch each case from the start and see that every infant had a fair chance of surviving the first few months, which is of such importance to its future well being.

To carry out the provisions of the Act it would probably be necessary to engage a Nurse to follow up each case and give instructions as to how to deal with delicate infants ; and her assistance would also be useful in dealing with some of the children attending the Elementary Schools and assisting the School Medical Officer in the performance of his duties.

I shall refer to this more fully in my Report as School Medical Officer, but I may here state that 471 such salaried Health Visitors, who also act as School Nurses, are now actually at work in 195 different localities.

### Infectious Diseases.

There have been 53 Notifications of Infectious Diseases received during the year, as compared with 105 last year. Five of these were of Diphtheria, forty-four Scarlet Fever, three Erysipelas, and one of Enteric Fever—this last disease was contracted while on a visit away from the town.

Three cases of Diphtheria and twenty-nine of Scarlet Fever were removed from their houses by the town's conveyance to the Isolation Hospital for treatment—this is a larger number than before and is evidence that the accommodation there is much appreciated and has, I believe, been the means of checking the spread of these dangerous diseases.

I have much pleasure in expressing my satisfaction with the way in which the caretakers, Mr. and Mrs. Bishop, have, with the assistance of their daughter, carried out my instructions, and their work has been so efficient that it has not been necessary to engage any further help in dealing even with some of the cases which were most serious, although you as a Council gave me power to do so had further assistance been really needed.

### Slaughter Houses.

There are 13 in number and all of them have been periodically inspected.

A Public Abattoir would be a great boon to the town, as it would be preferable to the numerous small private slaughter houses now adjacent to streets and dwellings, and would afford a check on the kind of meat offered in the town, and perhaps ensure more merciful treatment of animals before being slaughtered.

### Factory and Workshops Act.

From the Tables appended to this report it will be seen that 40 inspections have been made of Factories, 124 of Workshops, and 12 of Work-places, and where any defects were found steps were taken to have them remedied.

### Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1908.

No cases were notified under the above during the year.

### School Inspection.

. During the year under review the important work of Medical Inspection of Children attending the Elementary Public Schools of the Borough has proceeded satisfactorily and forms the subject of a special report from the Medical Inspector, to be found bound up with this report.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

H. SHARLAND POPE,

Medical Officer of Health.

# SANITARY REPORT, 1910.

Under the General Order of the Local Government Board, No. 1283, and which came into force on the first day of January, 1911, the duties of the Inspector of Nuisances are set out under Article XX., and Clause 16 provides that a tabular Statement is to be submitted to the Medical Officer of Health, containing the following particulars.

- a. The number and nature of inspections made during the year.
- b. The number of notices served during the year, distinguishing statutory from informal notices.
- c. The result of the service of such notice.

## Tabulated Statement of Inspections.

	Number on Register	Inspections.	Statutory Notices.		Informal Notices.	
			Served.	Abated.	Served.	Abated.
General Nuisances ...	191	450	96	79	95	76
Dairies, Cowsheds and Workshops ..	42	84			20	17
Bakehouses ... ...	33	66			20	18
Slaughter Houses ...	13	52			19	16
Factories & Workshops	164	164			35	17
Ontworkers ... ...	160	148			6	5

With reference to the Tabulated Statements hereinbefore given, the following are the details.

## General Nuisances.

	COMPLAINTS.	Reported.	Abated.	In hand.
Defective Drains ..	..	23	20	.. 3
" Iron Traps ..	..	32	24	.. 8
" W.C.'s ..	..	55	51	.. 4
" Trough Closets ..	..	17	4	.. 13
" Cisterns ..	..	7	7	.. —
" Sinks ..	..	1	1	.. —
" Closets without flushing apparatus ..	..	36	18	.. 18
" Eaves Gutters ..	..	35	31	.. 4

## General Nuisances (continued).

Complaints.	Reported.	Abated.	In hand.
Defective Rain Water Pipes ..	21	..	—
" Paving in Courtyards and Outbuildings ..	50	..	40
" Floors ..	8	..	6
" Roofs ..	2	..	1
" Walls ..	5	..	2
" Ceilings ..	1	..	1
" Windows ..	3	..	2
" Chimneys ..	2	..	2
Dangerous Staircase ..	1	..	1
Dwelling Houses or parts thereof in dirty condition ..	14	..	10
Outbuildings require cleaning and limewhiting ..	16	..	16
Dwelling Houses require cleaning after Infectious Diseases ..	2	..	2
Overcrowding ..	12	..	12
Accumulation of manure, ashes, etc. ..	1	..	1
Keeping Animals in improper places ..	1	..	1
Dilapidated condition of outbuildings ..	7	..	7
Dangerous buildings ..	1	..	1

## Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

## No. 1. Inspection.

	Inspections.	Written Notices.
Factories ..	40	4
Workshops ..	124	31
Workplaces ..	12	—
	—	—
	176	35

## No. 2. Defects found.

	Found.	Remedied.
Want of Cleanliness ..	10	4
Overcrowding ..	1	1
Other Nuisances ..	21	10
Sanitary Accommodation—		
Insufficient ..	2	1
Unsuitable or defective ..	11	5
Breach of special sanitary requirements ..	20	18
	—	—
Totals ..	65	39

### Outworkers.

Lists of outworkers received	...	24
Names and addresses of outworkers obtained	...	160
Names and addresses of outworkers received from other Councils	...	4
Names and addresses of outworkers forwarded to other Councils	...	5
Premises inspected	...	148
Outwork in unwholesome premises, notices served	...	6

### Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act.

#### Cases notified under the Act.

		1910.	1909.
Diphtheria	...	5	41
Scarlet Fever	...	44	55
Erysipelas	...	3	8
Enteric Fever	...	1	1
		—	—
		53	105

Table shewing the number of cases in each month of 1910 and 1909.

		1910.					1909.				
		Diphtheria.	Scarlet Fever.	Erysipelas.	Enteric Fever.	Total.	Diphtheria.	Scarlet Fever.	Erysipelas.	Puerperal Fever.	Total.
January	...	4				4	3	6	1		10
February	...	1	1			2	1	4		1	6
March	...	9				9	3	1			4
April	...	3				3	2	1			3
May	...	6				6	1				1
June	...	7	1			8	3	3	1		7
July	...	6				6	3	1	1		5
August	1	1		1		3	3	6	1		9
September	...	2				2	14	9	3		26
October	...	1				2	2	10	1		13
November	..	2				3	1	7	1		9
December	.	2	1	1		5	5	7			12
Totals ...		5	44	3	1	53	41	55	8	1	105

Table shewing ages, cases notified in each locality, and patients removed to hospital.

Notifiable Disease.	Cases notified in whole District.						Total cases notified in each Locality.						No. of cases removed to Hospital from each Locality.					
	At all ages.	Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 65.	65 and upwards.	Eastover	Westover	Eastover	Westover	N.	S.	N.	S.	N.	S.	Total cases removed to Hospital.
Diphtheria ..	5		2	1	2			3		1		1		1		2		3
Scarlet Fever ..	44		9	31	3	1		10	10	10	14	6	6	8	9			29
Erysipelas ..	3							2	1		2	1						
Enteric Fever ..	1							1		1								
Totals ..	53		11	32	5	4	1	14	10	13	16	7	6	10	9			32

### Food and Drugs Act.

Under the provisions of this Act, 91 samples have been obtained of the various articles as set out below, and were sent to the Borough Analyst for examination, with the following result :—

	Samples taken.	Reported as genuine.
Milk ...	35	32
Butter ...	17	17
Margarine ...	3	3
Lard ...	13	13
Cheese ...	2	2
Flour ...	2	2
Beer ...	4	4
Vinegar ...	4	4
Coffee ...	3	3
Cocoa ...	1	1
Drugs ...	7	7
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	91	88

Milk. Three cases reported on, one very slight, the other two being deficient in milk fat; proceedings were taken in these two cases, and in each case the vendor was fined 10/-.

Three cases of milk were also reported on as poor, and in each case the vendors were warned.

### New Streets and Buildings.

During the past year 37 sets of plans, shewing particulars of New Streets and Buildings, were submitted for the consideration of the Town Council. Particulars of such plans may be summarized as follows :—

New Dwelling Houses	...	...	4
Alterations and additions thereto	...	...	4
Business Premises, including alterations and additions	...	...	22
New Roads and Sewers	...	...	1
Chapel Extensions	...	...	2
Sundry small Buildings	..	...	8
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
			41

With reference to the completed works, the following have been examined and were reported to the Town Council as having been carried out in accordance with the deposited plans.

Dwelling Houses	...	...	18
Alterations and Additions	...	...	1
Business Premises	...	...	2
Chapel Extensions	...	...	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
			22

### Housing and Town Planning.

With reference to this Act, which came into force on the 1st day of January, 1910, arrangements have been carefully planned so as to make a thorough inspection of the 2997 houses within the Borough under £16 yearly rental, and a commencement was made in the Autumn.

Number of Inspections made	...	83
Number of Notices served	...	61

15 of these notices have been abated, and we have also been notified by the owners that eight houses are to be closed, instead of doing the necessary repairs set out in the notices.

### Main Drainage.

We have to report that during the year the redrainage of part of the houses on the eastern side of Bristol Road, and some of the houses in Union Street, has been proceeded with, glazed sanitary pipes being substituted for the old brick or field pipe sewers and connections. Other works in connection with the main drainage was a new sewer at Southbourne Terrace, North Street. The house connections were all condemned, and the owners called upon to redrain their property and reconnect to the new sewer.

### Rainfall.

As in past years, Tables are appended showing the Rainfall for 1910 at the Pumping Station, Ashford, and at Blake Gardens, Bridgwater, and with regard to the Ashford returns—

		1910.	1909.
No rain fell on	156 days.	194 days.	
The wettest month was	August.	December.	
The driest      "	September.	February.	
Greatest fall in 24 hours	August 28th.	December 16th.	

Month.	ASHFORD.				BRIDGWATER.			
	Total Depth.	Greatest Fall in 24 hours.	Inches	Inches	Date	Total Depth.	Greatest Fall in 24 hours.	Inches
January ...	4.19	.82	23	20	20	3.577	.76	23
February ...	4.37	.70	14	24		3.970	.55	14
March ...	.60	.25	9	9		.389	.21	9
April ...	3.00	.48	6	20		2.574	.44	6
May ...	3.55	1.10	22	20		2.029	.44	19
June ...	3.42	.80	5	14		3.133	.735	5
July ...	2.74	1.25	16	17		2.513	1.09	16
August ...	5.44	1.65	28	20		4.785	1.89	28
September ...	.39	.24	14	5		.265	.20	14
October ...	5.35	1.06	27	18		5.883	1.41	27
November ...	4.62	.70	27	21		3.153	.64	27
December ...	5.43	.82	14	21		5.323	.68	12
Total ...	43.10			209		37.594		186

Rainfall for previous 5 years.

	Ashford.	Bridgwater.
1906.	28'36	25'57
1907.	32'48	29'42
1908.	24'96	23'58
1909.	26'34	24'25
1910.	43'10	37'59

Your obedient Servants,

H. S. POPE, M.A. ; M.B. : B.C.,  
Medical Officer of Health.

FRANCIS PARR, A.M.I.C.E.,  
Sanitary Inspector.

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**Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1910 and Previous Years in the Borough of Bridgwater.**

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each year.	BIRTHS.		TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.				Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Non-Residents registered in Public Institutions in the District.	Nett deaths at all ages belonging to the district.	
				Under 1 year		All ages.				Number.	Rate *
		Number.	Rate *	Number.	Rate per 1000 births registered.	Number.	Rate per 1000 births registered.			Number.	Rate *
1900	15900	533	36·7	69	128·3	292	19·7	62		292	19·7
1901	16014	531	33·8	56	108·7	293	18·8	56		293	18·8
1902	16214	591	36·4	68	115·0	296	18·2	46	4	296	18·2
1903	16214	507	31·2	58	114·3	267	16·4	53	29	267	16·4
1904	16414	512	31·3	59	115·2	274	16·6	64	30	274	16·6
1905	16414	495	30·1	57	115·1	300	18·2	60	24	300	18·2
1906	15500	446	28·7	43	96·4	248	16·0	65	31	217	14·0
1907	15500	448	28·9	51	113·0	253	16·3	65	35	218	14·0
1908	15580	442	28·4	53	119	260	17·3	58	31	229	14·6
1909	15900	421	26·4	53	125·8	279	17·5	69	28	251	15·8
Averages for Years 1900-1909.		.	.								
1910	15900	383	24	38	99·2	200	12·5	49	31	169	10·6

\* Calculated at per 1000 of the estimated Population.

Table shewing CAUSES OF, and AGES AT DEATH, during the Year 1910, among the residents of the Borough of Bridgwater.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Deaths in Public Institutions				
	All ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.
Scarlet Fever . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1
Whooping Cough . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup) . . . . .	4	1	1	1	1
Epidemic Influenza . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1
Diarrhoea . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1
Gastritis . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1
Phthisis . . . . .	9	1	1	1	1
Other tubercular diseases . . . . .	6	2	1	1	1
Cancer . . . . .	16	1	1	1	1
Bronchitis . . . . .	8	1	1	1	1
Pneumonia . . . . .	17	6	1	1	1
Pleurisy . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1
Alcoholism, Cirrhosis of Liver . . . . .	2	1	1	1	1
Premature Birth . . . . .	9	9	1	1	1
Diseases and Accidents of Parturition . . . . .	5	1	1	1	1
Heart Diseases . . . . .	17	2	2	2	2
Accidents . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1
Cerebral Hæmorrhage . . . . .	12	8	8	8	8
Convulsions . . . . .	8	1	1	1	1
Senile decay . . . . .	13	10	1	4	10
All other causes . . . . .	36	10	1	4	11
ALL CAUSES . . . . .	169	38	3	6	53
					49

**Infantile Mortality during the Year 1910 in the  
Borough of Bridgwater.**

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 week				1-2 weeks.				2-3 weeks.				3-4 weeks.				Total under 1 month.				Total Deaths under One Year.
Diarrhoea, all forms																					1
Gastritis																					1
Premature Birth	3	2		4	9																9
Congenital defects	1	1				2															2
Injury at Birth	...	1			1																1
Atrophy, Debility,																					5
Marasmus																					
Tuberculous																					1
Peritonitis																					1
Other Tuberculous																					1
Diseases																					
Meningitis																					2
(not Tuberculous)																					
Convulsions	...	1	2	1		4	1	1	1	1											8
Bronchitis	...																				1
Pneumonia	...																	1	2	1	6
All Causes	..	6	5	1	4	16	3	2	1	7	1										38

Births in the Year { Legitimate, 379.  
                          Illegitimate, 4.

Deaths in the Year { Legitimate, 36.  
                          Illegitimate, 2.

Deaths from all Causes at all Ages 200.

# REPORT

ON

## MEDICAL INSPECTION OF CHILDREN

ATTENDING THE

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN BRIDGWATER,

To December 31st, 1910.

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PREPARED BY

H. SHARLAND POPE, M.A.; M.B.; B.C., Medical Inspector.

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BRIDGWATER:

Printed and Published by PAGE & SON, Fore Street.

1911.



# Report on Medical Inspection of Children ATTENDING THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN BRIDGWATER For the Year 1910.

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Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

As School Medical Officer I present my report on the work done during the year 1910, which is printed for facility of reference and in order that a supply of copies may be available for distribution among the members of the Authority and other persons interested.

The Board of Education has laid down a plan which has been adopted as far as possible, and after the experience of the last three years one is able to make the report more comprehensive than before, and the information gained will be of greater assistance in years to come in working out a scheme for deriving the full benefits which should accrue from a complete system of medical inspection.

## *(a) Hygienic Condition of the Schools.*

Each block of buildings has been inspected from time to time ; any defects noticed have been remedied, and the sanitary arrangements may be considered to be in good order.

In one set of buildings, which have been liable to over-crowding in the past, proposals are under consideration for remodelling the school arrangements to prevent this in the future.

When dealing with children it is always most important to remember how susceptible they are to their surroundings, and this has been borne in mind when making any suggestions with regard to the hygiene of the schools.

## *(b) Co-relation of the school medical service, including*

- (1) *Use of the Board's schedule.*
- (2) *Assistance given by teachers.*
- (3) *Co-operation of parents.*
- (4) *Disturbance of school arrangements.*

(1) The schedule in use is based upon that issued by the Board of Education and is the same as that used by the Somerset County Council, as there is a frequent interchange of scholars between the two authorities, and it simplifies matters to have the same method of recording results.

There have been a few additions made to the schedule which is now very complete.

The record is kept on cards 8 inches by 5, being white for boys and blue for girls. These cards are kept at the different schools by the head teacher, and when a child moves from one school to another the cards follow them.

(2) The first part of the card is filled in by the teachers from information supplied by parents on forms which are issued when a child is newly admitted to the schools.

The teachers also send a printed notice to each parent informing them when any particular child is to be examined, thereby giving the parent the opportunity of being present.

(3) Parents frequently attend the inspection of their children and are then able to give useful information concerning them, and at the same time the school medical officer is able to point out any defects that are discovered and impress upon them the necessity of having these defects remedied, for which purpose they are advised to seek the assistance of their own medical man.

(4) Only one school has a special room which can be used for medical inspection, but in all the others it has been possible to do the work without much disturbance of the other classes.

#### *Results of Medical Inspection.*

(1) Number of children examined was 761, for which I paid 78 visits to the schools, besides numerous other occasions when sent for by teachers or for the purpose of following up any particular child or consulting with the teachers over special cases.

(2) The children selected were :

- (a) Those in infant departments on admission.
- (b) Those in their last year.
- (c) Those specially selected by teachers.

The following tables show the defects found in the Boys and Girls. Boys in last year of school, number inspected 139.

Dirty heads	...	...	2
Dirty or ragged clothing	...	...	4
Defective sight	...	...	12
Diseases of ear	...	...	2
Decayed teeth	...	...	96
Diseases of throat and nose	...	...	30
Special directions	...	...	5

Parents present at inspection, 40.

Girls in the last year of school, number inspected 145.

Dirty heads	...	...	62
,, body	...	...	8
,, or ragged clothing	...	...	22
Defective sight	...	...	13
,, hearing	...	...	6
,, nutrition	...	...	4
Decayed teeth	...	...	84
Diseases of throat and nose	...	...	42
Other defects	...	...	18
Weak lungs	...	...	4
Special directions	...	...	15

Parents present at inspection, 56.

Intermediate ages for special examination. Number inspected, 72.

Dirty heads	...	...	35
,, body	...	...	12
,, or ragged clothing	...	...	8
Defective sight	...	...	10
,, nutrition	...	...	8
,, hearing	...	...	6
Decayed teeth	...	...	34
Diseases of nose and throat	...	...	8
Other defects	...	...	6

Parents present at inspection, 12.

Infants entering school. Number inspected, 376.

Dirty heads	...	...	58
,, body	...	..	15
,, or ragged clothing	...	...	22
Diseases of the ear	...	...	4
Defective nutrition	...	...	10
Decayed teeth	...	...	28
Diseases of nose and throat	...	...	56
Weak lungs	...	...	4
Other defects	...	...	49
Special directions	...	..	15

Parents present at inspection, 249.

Besides these, 29 children were examined on several occasions because of special defects, and in some instances as many as 6 inspections of the same child were made in order to follow up suggestions given at the time of inspection, to see that matters were being attended to. These defects chiefly had reference to dirty heads, and in three instances it was necessary to lay down special rules for dealing with children whose mental condition was such that they could not properly benefit from the ordinary teaching of the class to which they belonged.

In the records kept there is information with regard to various points in the life history of the child.

- (1) Family history is enquired into whenever possible or when any particular weakness is suspected.
- (2) Personal history of the child.

Entry is made of its having had any of the infantile diseases such as measles, whooping cough, chicken pox, scarlet fever, and diphtheria, and it will be possible to act upon this information in case a child becomes exposed to infection at any subsequent period.

#### *General Physical Condition and Defects.*

(1) *Clothing.* In many instances this was distinctly bad, and in some cases scanty in quantity.

No doubt that the knowledge that the child has to come up for inspection tends to induce the mother to make it as smart as possible, and often they are specially cleaned for the occasion, but this is noted on the card by the teachers, and it is pleasing to note that there has been some improvement in these matters since inspection has been instituted.

(2) *Nutrition.* In 22 instances the children were badly nourished. This was brought to the notice of the parents, and in some cases the help of the officials of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was distinctly useful where there was evidence of general neglect.

(3) *Dirty heads and bodies.* This number is very large, and as usual the bigger girls were affected much more than children of other ages.

White cards with instructions for dealing with dirty heads were issued in the first instance, and if the defect was not soon remedied, Red cards were given which showed that that the children would be excluded from school, and this would render the parents liable to prosecution for non-attendance.

This is a matter which could be better dealt with if a school nurse were appointed to follow the cases up, as in a number of cases the parents do not systematically carry out the instructions given on the cards, which if done would soon get rid of the trouble and ease the minds of the other parents who keep their children clean and who dread the filthy contamination to which their little ones are exposed through having to associate so closely with those who are not clean.

Four cases of ringworm were discovered and the affected children excluded from school.

(4) *Teeth.* I regret say that the condition of the teeth generally speaking is very bad: more than one-third of the children are affected to such an extent that their physique must suffer in consequence.

Scarcely any of the parents appear to take any notice of the state of the mouth, which, if better attended to, would improve their children's teeth, but I do not see how this can be remedied without putting them under the care of a dentist.

There has been evidence that in some cases the general cleanliness of the teeth is improved by care in washing out the mouth after meals, but I would wish to impress on parents that the eating of unwholesome sweets tend to cause decay of the teeth, which become the home of countless deleterious bacilli, the constant presence of which causes the teeth to decay more rapidly.

(5) *Nose and throat.* Numerous cases of enlarged tonsils and adenoids were referred for medical treatment, and in several instances this was carried out either at home or at the Hospital.

(6) *Vision.* Many cases of defective vision were discovered, some of whom procured suitable spectacles, but there still remains a considerable number of children who really need glasses but are not in a position to incur the expense of procuring them.

For dealing with the worst cases it might be possible to approach the oculist of the Somerset County Council Education Committee, to see if he could give the necessary examinations and prescribe spectacles, such as has been done with other local authorities in our County.

I think a few days each year would be all that is sufficient to deal with the bad cases, and would, I think, be much appreciated by many parents, while the expense need not be very great.

(7) *Ear disease and deafness.* In only a few children was this of any great importance and the parents were advised to seek further help.

(8) *Infectious diseases.* As cases have occurred they have been properly isolated at home or removed to the Borough Hospital, while other members of the family have been kept out of school for the usual quarantine period.

Owing to Medical Inspection having now been carried out systematically for three years, I have drawn up the following table showing the average height and weight of children at various ages. The figures relate to about 1200 children and the results are useful to show how they compare with that of all classes (town and country) of the general population of Great Britain.

### BOYS.

#### Height.

#### Weight.

	Bridgwater.	Great Britain.	Bridgwater.	Great Britain.				
	ft.	in.	ft.	in.	st.	lbs.	st.	lbs.
3 years.	3	0	2	11	2	5	2	6
4 "	3	2	3	1	2	7	2	9
5 "	3	4	3	4	2	10	2	12
6 "	3	7	3	7	3	2	3	2
7 "	3	9	3	10	3	5	3	7
8 "	3	11	3	11	3	12	3	13
9 "	4	1	4	2	4	2	4	4
10 "	4	6	4	4	4	8	4	11
11 "	4	7	4	6	5	2	5	2
12 "	4	8	4	7	5	5	5	7
13 "	4	8	4	9	5	10	5	12

### GIRLS.

#### Height.

#### Weight.

	Bridgwater.	Great Britain.	Bridgwater.	Great Britain.				
	ft.	in.	ft.	in.	st.	lbs.	st.	lbs.
3 years.	3	1	2	10	2	4	2	3
4 "	3	2	3	0	2	7	2	8
5 "	3	4	3	3	2	10	2	11
6 "	3	6	3	6	3	1	3	0
7 "	3	9	3	8	3	5	3	6
8 "	3	9	3	10	3	8	3	10
9 "	4	0	4	1	3	11	3	13
10 "	4	2	4	3	4	4	4	6
11 "	4	6	4	5	4	11	4	12
12 "	4	7	4	7	5	2	5	6
13 "	4	9	4	10	5	9	6	3

### General Remarks.

With regard to the sanitary condition of the school premises, much depends upon the caretakers. I therefore intend to interview them before long to regulate their daily and weekly work as well as that done in the holidays. This I hope will indirectly be an object lesson to the children in cleanliness as regards floors and windows, and perhaps induce them to look after such matters in their homes.

Earlier in this report I have mentioned the desirability of having a school nurse who could also be Health Visitor, to visit the parents and impress upon them the necessity of dealing with the defects found on Medical Inspection. In some places this work is undertaken by "Care Committees" of voluntary helpers, but assistance of this kind is very difficult to control, and I think it might be possible to make some arrangement with our Town Nursing Association to take the matter in hand.

I have information that in other places there are already engaged upon this work, in 195 different localities, no less than 471 salaried Health Visitors who are also school nurses. Of these, 350 are paid entirely out of the rates, 38 partly out of the rates, while 82 others draw a salary from some philanthropic organisation co-operating with the local authority.

Experience has shown that the children have greatly benefitted where such a plan has been adopted, and the average attendance cannot fail to be improved by it.

It is gratifying to find that the parents turn up at the inspections in considerable numbers, showing their interest in what is being done for the welfare of the little ones. They often take away with them the height and weight, and are pleased to be informed of the absence or otherwise of the presence of disease.

The routine work of inspection is greatly facilitated by the pleasant way in which the teachers have assisted me in my duties, and it is through their kindly interest in those committed to their charge that we can look forward to improvement in the general wellbeing of the children.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient servant,

H. SHARLAND POPE, M.A.: M.B.,  
School Medical Officer.

